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16 December 1946

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL GALLOWAY

Assistant Director, Special Operations

From: [REDACTED]

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~~Subject:~~ Vetting Office (VTO) - Discontinuance of

There is attached hereto a memorandum submitted to this office on 22 November 1946 by [REDACTED] Vetting Officer, wherein he proposes certain changes in vetting procedure and recommends the issuance of new directives concerning this function.

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The Vetting Office was originally established in the old X-2 Branch in the spring of 1944 and was generally patterned after the operational vetting procedure then used by Section 5 of British SIS MI-6. In theory all proposed plans of operations were to be submitted to the VTO for the vetting of the security of agent personnel involved prior to the activation of the project. Actually, this procedure was never adhered to for several reasons; (1) due to the time element involved during war time operations it was often necessary for field stations to commence operations prior to the formal preparation of the project in report form and its submission to Washington for approval; (2) the other branches of OSS were theoretically required to submit all of their projects to VTO for scrutiny and approval, but due to the rivalry existing between the OSS branches it was often times the case that intelligence officers in branches other than X-2, as well as some personnel within the X-2 Branch itself, refused to submit their plans to VTO for reasons of secrecy. This vetting procedure was defined in a directive issued by General Donovan upon the activation of VTO.

Just prior to the merger of the SI and X-2 Branches under SSU, the SI Branch commenced the use of a special system which in part consisted of the vetting of agents under the code name KAPOK. This system is still in use and no KAPOK material as such is made available to VTO. VTO is headed by [REDACTED] who has in his office a secretary, [REDACTED] and a clerk, [REDACTED]. Their work load is not very heavy and [REDACTED] has advised me that he and his assistants are not gainfully employed throughout the entire working day.

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[REDACTED] the writer has never subscribed to this practice of making vetting a highly specialized and separate branch function.

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According to my conception of this operational problem, vetting is the responsibility of the Branch Chief and his intelligence staff. Theoretically this responsibility goes further and final decision in any questionable case can be put up to the Chief of Operations or his Deputy.

50X1 Since the VTO procedure as it now exists cannot be described as successful, and in order to simplify our organizational set up and strengthen the branches, it is recommended that the personnel of VTO be reassigned to the branches and that vetting be made a responsibility of the separate branch organizations. It should also be noted that in SC Directive [] which outlines the organization of Special Operations, no mention is made of the Office of VTO, though it is presumed that it is considered to come under the supervision of the Deputy Chief of Operations.

ILLEGIB This matter has been discussed with [] who is currently conducting a survey of the OSO Registry problem. He has assured me that with a central registry the file checks which are required in the vetting procedure can easily be handled by clerks in the Registry. If this recommendation is accepted, it is suggested that the VTO files, cards and special records be turned over to [] for incorporation in the Registry.

50X1 Under the present procedure, [] maintains his separate liaison channels to the FBI, G-2, ONI and other Government departments that maintain files of intelligence information. This special liaison does not appear to be necessary nor desirable. While it is necessary in vetting operation to have access to the files of FBI, G-2, ONI and other Government agencies, it is believed that sufficient channels for approach to these organizations already exist in our immediate organization. While this liaison would normally be a function of the Control Branch, it is suggested that since the handling of the vetting procedure as it relates to these outside agencies is primarily a matter of low-level liaison and routine investigation, that these duties be assigned to the Security Office. This proposition has already been discussed with [] [] Chief of the Security Branch, and he has assured me

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